



# SOIL AND WATER Resources



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April 2017

## King City Family Are National Association of Conservation Districts April Champion of the Month

*Reprinted from The NACD Resource*

Together, the Willis family from Andrew County joined the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) Soil Health Champions Network back in 2015, each playing a role in their operation and also promoting soil health in their community, state, and region.

The Willis family farm near King City, with a diverse crop rotation of corn, soybeans, wheat, cereal rye, oats, and winter barley. Their specific rotation choices have served to break up certain cycles of pests and weeds. Additional practices include no-till farming for erosion control and build-up of organic matter and cover crops, which can be grazed in the fall and winter.

This past November, Michael Willis was a guest speaker at the Kansas Rural Center's annual conference held in Manhattan, Kansas, sharing his experience using a roller-crimper for cover crop control on terraced ground as part of a Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) grant he received. Later in February, Ron and Michael Willis participated in a producer panel at a cover crop and soil health meeting in St. Joseph, speaking directly to their peers on what worked well on their farm when implementing cover crops and no-till.



The Willis family from King City.

NACD photo

If you or someone you know is interested in soil health and would like to become a member of this growing, progressive network, contact NACD North Central Region Representative Beth Mason at [beth-mason@nacdn.net](mailto:beth-mason@nacdn.net) or 317-946-4463.

## Missouri State Fair Scholarships Awarded to 4-H and FFA Youth

Missouri State Fair Director Mark Wolfe announced that 32 youth, selected from Missouri 4-H and FFA, will be awarded scholarships by the Missouri State Fair Foundation Youth in Agriculture (YIA) committee. These students are seeking higher education at a Missouri university/college, and will receive their scholarships Friday, April 21, during the annual State FFA Convention in Columbia.

"The Youth in Agriculture scholarship is a 25-year tradition that financially assists Missouri's next generation of agriculture leaders," Wolfe said. "Year after year, Youth in Agriculture supporters open their wallets to support the future of the ag industry." Scholarship applicants were evaluated in a variety of areas including Missouri State Fair participation, grade point average, community involvement and leadership roles. Since 1992, the YIA committee has awarded 570 scholarships totaling \$558,000. The scholarships are funded through the generosity of Youth in Agriculture sponsors and buyers of the livestock sold during the annual Sale of Champions; the sponsors and buyers list is available online. A portion of each animal's sale price is allocated to the scholarship program. The Missouri State Fair Foundation also provides significant support of the scholarship program through fundraising efforts including the Governor's Ham Breakfast.

Mattison Lenae Ishmael, of Gallatin, has been selected to receive the \$5,000 platinum scholarship offered by YIA supporters. Allison Bertz, of Mayview, has been selected to receive the \$2,500 supreme scholarship, sponsored by Sydenstricker John Deere of Missouri/Sydenstricker Angus Genetics.

The youth chosen to receive \$1,500 scholarships, sponsored by the Missouri State Fair Foundation and YIA supporters are:

- Jackson Barry, Canton
- Corbin Bell, Higginsville
- Abby Bertz, Mayview
- Emily Blaue, Wellsville
- Bailey Boland, Sweet Springs
- Ashton E. Brockman, Brookfield
- Austin Dotson, Cameron
- Tanner Ellison, Baring
- Grace Erickson, Bolivar
- Mariah Gach, St. Joseph
- Kiley A. Gibson, Ridgeway
- Shambree Hagan, Princeton
- Kale Harris, New Franklin
- Caleb Hudson, Middletown
- Allison L. Jenkins, Butler
- Claire Emma Ludwig, Linn
- Kade Matthew Marnin, Mendon
- Aaron Mott, Rocheport
- Kristina Nadler, Wentzville
- Kaylee Peel, Chillicothe
- Elijah Kade Plattner, Chillicothe
- Hannah Rockers, Carthage
- Jeb Schaefer, Callao
- Joslyn Seals, Browning
- Abigail Turner, Brookfield
- Jacob E. Vaughn, Sturgeon
- Madison Walkup, Gower
- Davis Washburn, King City
- Sara Webb, Unionville
- Audrey Wilson, Clever

This year's auction will be held Saturday, Aug. 19, in the Lowell Mohler Assembly Hall on the fairgrounds.

### **Native Grasses and Plants Enhance Wetland at Lincoln University's Carver Farm**

A man-made wetland is being enhanced with native grasses and plants on Lincoln University's George Washington Carver Farm in Jefferson City. The Environmental Protection Agency Region 7, through the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, has provided partial funding for this project under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.

The 319 Grant funded construction of the wetland and an additional EPA Wetland Development Program Grant helped purchase 299 native grasses and plants that the Lincoln University's Agriculture Department and Wildlife Club planted in the water and at the water's edge. The project established a highly visible demonstration wetland at Lincoln University's George Washington Carver Farm. The wetland is adjacent to the Moreau River. Agriculture practices on the George

Washington Carver Farm include crop and livestock production among the many research, extension and teaching activities. This project demonstrates the importance of wetlands in improving water quality, groundwater recharge, flood control, phytoremediation, wildlife/fish habitat, and biodiversity.

The wetland demonstrates alternative uses for marginally productive land and provides a model for public entities to augment their environmental impact. Lincoln University is the only land grant institution in Missouri that has a wetland, which is a unique opportunity for educational and experiential learning.

Staff from the department's Water Resources Center installed a groundwater observation well monitoring station at the site. The station monitors groundwater levels and meteorological data that are posted online in near real-time through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Geological Survey. Carver Farm station data is available online at [bit.ly/2hwzfSf](http://bit.ly/2hwzfSf).

As part of the wetland development program grant, the department is collaborating with Lincoln University students in the university's Agriculture Department and Wildlife Club to develop interpretive signage and educational literature for a trail along the wetland that will be built by Carver Farm staff. Educational tours of the wetland are available.

Cooperating agencies include Lincoln University, Missouri Department of Natural Resources, U. S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service, Ducks Unlimited, Hamilton Native Outpost, Missouri Department of Conservation, U.S. Geological Survey, and Three Rivers Electric Cooperative.

For more information contact Lincoln University project manager Jeremia Markway at 573-681-5540 or email [markwayj@lincolnu.edu](mailto:markwayj@lincolnu.edu).



**Students flag areas to use the digging tools needed to plant native grasses at the wetland.**



**Members of Lincoln University's Agriculture Department and Wildlife Club work to plant native grasses on the banks of the wetland.**



**Collaborating on the work to plant native grasses.**

### **Nearly \$39 million Obligated to Missouri Farmers for Soil and Water Conservation Practices**

Nearly \$39 million in cost-share funds have been obligated by local county soil and water conservation districts assisting Missouri farmers to implement voluntary planned soil and water conservation practices from July 1, 2016 to March 31, 2017. Local county soil and water conservation district boards, staff and conservation partners provide financial and technical assistance to farmers and operators to voluntarily implement locally approved soil and water conservation practices. Fifty different soil and water conservation practices are available to address the following resources issues:

- Management of grazing lands
- Woodland erosion
- Irrigation management
- Animal waste management
- Nutrient and pest application to crops and pastures
- Protection of sensitive areas such as streams and sinkholes
- Sheet, rill and gully soil erosion

To contact your local soil and water conservation district office or to find out more information, visit [dnr.mo.gov/env/swcp/service/index.html](http://dnr.mo.gov/env/swcp/service/index.html).

Soil and water conservation practices are funded by the Parks, Soils and Water Sales Tax.

#### **Dates to Remember**

April 26 - Missouri Envirothon at the Bradford Research Center in Columbia. [moenvirothon.org](http://moenvirothon.org)

May 15 - National Association of Conservation Districts Urban Agriculture Conservation Grants Initiative deadline. [bit.ly/2oJSQo0](http://bit.ly/2oJSQo0)

June 3 - Pesticide Roundup at University of Missouri Extension Center at 260 Brown Road in St. Peters. [on.mo.gov/1WxgYoC](http://on.mo.gov/1WxgYoC)

June 24 - Pesticide Roundup at DeWitt Auction Company, 220 DeWitt Dr. in Sikeston. [on.mo.gov/1WxgYoC](http://on.mo.gov/1WxgYoC)

July 15 - Pesticide Roundup at Litton Agri-Science Learning Center at 10780 Liv 235 off Highway 190 in Chillicothe. [on.mo.gov/1WxgYoC](http://on.mo.gov/1WxgYoC)



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